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16

DIVINE WORSHIP.

A SERMON

PREACHED IN

S. James' Church,

WILMINGTON, N. C.,

THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER TRINITY,

JUNE 9th, 1872.

BY THE RECTOR

REV. ALFRED A. WATSON, D. D.

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St. MATTHEW, IV:10. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.

In the narrative of S. Peter's visit to Cornelius, in the 2d lesson of the morning,¹ it is said that upon the Apostle's entrance into the centurion's house, "Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him," Acts x:25. Had the text, by any chance, been mutilated at this point, so as to omit the succeeding verse, it might have been supposed to justify the falling down before a living Apostle. But even so, it would not follow that the worship of an image, as for example of the iron image of S. Peter at Rome, would be justifiable; seeing that the worship of *images* is the very thing forbidden in the Second Commandment. But providentially, the 26th verse has *not* been lost; wherein it is added, "But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man." Wherefore not even the living Apostle—special temple of the Holy Ghost as he was—could be allowed to receive such homage from mortals. Again, in the Apocalypse, when one of the Seven mighty Angels had been sent unto S. John, that Apostle tells us, Rev. xix:10 "I fell at his feet to worship him, and he said unto me, see thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God." In still another instance, xxii:9 S. John having fal-

¹This Sermon was prepared for the 2d Sunday after Trinity, and is the third of a series upon the subject of Divine Worship.

len down before the feet of his guide, the warning is repeated : "See thou do it not."

Mark ! how prostration for worship before a living Apostle is forbidden in one case, and how the same act of homage before angels is forbidden in the others. Mark too, the *reason* assigned, "*Worship God.*" It is the prohibition of such homage to anything not God.

But in this last instance we have also the expression of another principle, viz : The duty of worshipping all that *is* God. So S. Matt. iv:10 "Thou *shalt* worship the Lord thy God, and Him *only* shalt thou serve."²

Resuming to-day the subject upon which I have twice addressed you, and starting from one central Principle, viz :

THE SUPREME DIGNITY AND OBLIGATION OF DIVINE WORSHIP,

I propose to make the lesson of to-day two-fold, viz :

First : The Duty of worshipping all that is truly God.

Second : The Sin of worshipping what is not God, or of worshipping God Himself through images.

Let me remind you of some of the positions taken before. Distinguishing Worship from prayer, and from praise, and from communion with God, I defined it as the proper *attitude*—the prostration—of the creature before his creator ; the homage due to God ; its source, one of the seven gifts of the Blessed Spirit, *Holy Fear*³. I maintained the duty of Worship as one of *direct Supreme obligation*, a duty of the very first class, independent of all other duties or states of soul ; not so much an expression of other dutiful conditions of soul, e.g: Love, or Obedience, as a duty in itself ; a duty on its own account ; primarily expressive, however, of simple Reverence ; an acknowledgment of man's subjection and of God's Supreme Royalty ; a duty binding upon all ; due from all capable of understanding it ; due from deaf, dumb and blind ; from the wicked as well as from the good ; due, not as being the occasion of receiving anything from God but as something to be done by us Godward ; the obligation to which, therefore,

²The word translated "serve" is *latreusdis*, from the same root as *latrīa* which is used for *Divine worship*. I shall use the word "worship" in this discourse in its popular signification, as expressive of the homage paid to GOD ; *latrīa*, not *duilia*.

³When (S. Matt., IV:10) says "*Worship*" the quotation is from (Deut. VI:13) where the expression is "*Fear*." This is to be distinguished from the "*Fear*" of (I. S. John IV:18) and to be identified with the *Fear* of (Rev. XV:4).

does not depend upon our *receptive* senses, our being able to see or hear, but upon our being able to understand and do the homage required. It is a duty to be rendered not only in private, but in public also, before the world ; a tribute, whose publicity upon all duly appointed occasions, is a matter of special obligation ; from the public rendering of which neither blindness nor deafness can excuse us ; a tribute to be paid upon the whole being, and all that belongs to it ; to be expressed by humiliation of soul, prostration of body, lifting up of voice and offerings of property.

I maintain, then, that this duty of worship is the most direct, and the first in order, of all our duties to our Creator ; in time, taking precedence of even Obedience. When God reveals himself to his creature, the first decree of nature is, WORSHIP HIM.

But this obligation of worship is very much undervalued, often forgotten, or at least dismissed to a place in the scale of duties very far below its due. Through want of Faith—that faculty by which we habitually realize the existence and the presence of God—it has become almost impossible for men to recognize the true dignity of the law of Divine Worship, or the enormity of the sins committed against it, whether by refusing God the worship due Him, or by rendering the homage which is the exclusive prerogative of the Creator, to or through a creature. It has become hard for you and me to understand the horror, with which Irreverence on one side, and Idolatry on the other, are treated in Holy Scripture, or the severity with which they were punished. We have ceased, I fear, to be in full accord with Holy Scripture upon this subject.

But if Holy Scripture be the word of God, it is worth our while to observe how it exalts this duty of worship ; how imperatively it demands for God the homage due Him, and at the same time forbids idolatry. It is worth our while, moreover, to observe how rigidly God holds man responsible for finding out Him, the true God, and so for avoiding the payment of divine honors to false Gods. This demand is absolutely made, whether of the Heathen, by way of those “invis-

ible things of God," which S. Paul affirms might, "from the creation of the world, be clearly seen, even His Eternal Power and Godhead; being understood by the things that are made," Rom. I:20; or of Jews and Christians, by way of that Revelation which has more clearly disclosed Him. Heathen, and Jew and Christian are held responsible for finding their way to the true God by the one or the other road.

But if the Heathen, in their comparative darkness, are condemned for "changing the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man," Rom. i:23. much more must we, with all the light of Revelation upon us, be guilty, if we fail to find and to worship God as He is revealed.

There are theories or doctrines which, in ordinary parlance, may be said to affect, either no practice at all, or only inferior points of practice. Not so those which concern the person of God, or the necessities of His worship. The great doctrine taught in the church, at this period of the ecclesiastical year, is an illustration of this—the doctrine of the Trinity. Shallow thinkers, who never see beyond the one proposition before them, may regard this doctrine as purely abstract and metaphysical. But when the Christian comes to *worship* his God, he finds it in the highest sense practical. If he be thoroughly in earnest, he *cannot* worship satisfactorily, till this question be first settled. It is not merely—Has God a triple personality in His Nature? But, Is Jesus Christ God? Is the Holy Spirit an actual and a divine Being? *Must I* worship Jesus Christ? *Must I* worship the Holy Ghost? or am I *at liberty* to worship either? Since, if the Lord Jesus Christ be revealed to us as God, He must be worshipped as God. If the Holy Ghost be a personal Being, *He* must be worshipped.

The question of the Trinity, then, so far from being an abstract one—one of mere religious metaphysics—becomes one of the very highest rank of practical importance. It is in effect, either, on one hand Shall we refuse to God the worship which before all other duties we owe Him? or, Shall we render a creature the homage which God retains exclu-

sively for Himself, and so be guilty of the fearful sin of Idolatry ?

We cannot afford to stand neutral on this question. On which ever side we fail to recognize the truth revealed, we sin, and that gravely. If the Christ be revealed as God, then the Unitarian who denies this, or does not believe it, and so refuses to worship Him, is guilty of *refusing to worship God*. If the Christ be *not* God, then the Trinitarian, who *does* worship Him, is an *idolater*. There is no avoiding the dilemma. We must either worship or refuse to worship. If God has instructed us upon this very point, we cannot step to one side and throw off our responsibility. It is one of those awful responsibilities put upon us as Christians, under the light of Revelation, which we cannot escape, but which I am persuaded we can meet, if only as anxious to do so faithfully as we are to establish political truths, to solve scientific questions, or to understand our own important temporal interests.

I will not now go into the full argument upon the question of the Trinity. The more important points in that question we considered upon Trinity Sunday. I prefer this morning, as a sort of appendix to what was then taught, to show how, in the book from which two of the texts are taken—the Apocalypse—(the last and ripest book of the sacred canon)—the dignity of the Christ is recognized as Divine, and is distinguished from that of angels ; while his Sonship and subordination to the Father are not overlooked ; even as the same two great diverging yet consistent truths are taught by the Lord Himself in the Gospel.

We have seen how, twice, in the Apocalypse, the Apostle was most emphatically forbidden to worship even one of the seven great Angels. But now consider how our Lord is spoken of in this same book of Revelation, so watchful against idolatry.

But first : Observe the opening proclamation in the name of God : Rev. 1:8 “I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the Ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the ALMIGHTY.” Then—only two

verses after—vs. 10, 11. “I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last.” * * * vs. 12 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw vs. 13 one like unto the *Son of Man*, * * * vs. 17 And when I saw Him, I fell at his feet as dead. And He laid His right hand upon me, saying unto me (this time, he does not say, “See thou do it not,” but,) “Fear not: I am the First and the Last; I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of Hell and of Death.” He who had been dead, proclaims Himself by the very titles by which, just before, the Almighty had proclaimed Himself. Or—shall we say—He who was the Almighty, is identified with Him who had been dead. And so, this remarkable identification of titles goes on throughout the book. Thus xxi:5, 6, 7 “He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new; and he said unto me, * * * I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God.”

Observe the style royal of the Epistles from the Lord Christ to the seven churches of Asia. To the angel (or Bishop) of Ephesus Rev. II:5 “Remember,—or I will remove thy candlestick.” vs. 7 “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life.” To the angel of Smyrna, vs. 8 “These things saith the FIRST AND THE LAST, which was dead, and is alive.” vs. 10 “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—To the angel of Thyatira, vs. 23 “All the churches shall know that I am He which SEARCHETH THE REINS AND HEARTS.”⁴ To the angel of Laodicea, III:21 “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne.”

Sonship, yet Divinity—Subordination, yet Divine Power and Authority, community of titles and of throne.

In the fifth chapter it is written v. 6, “Lo, in the mibst of

⁴Compare with this the title given by S. Paul to God, (Rom. VIII:27) “He that searcheth the hearts,” or the expression, (2 Chron. VI:30) “Thou (God) only knowest the hearts of the children of men.”

the throne (of God) and (in the midst) of the four beasts, (or living creatures) * * * stood a Lamb as it had been slain." vs. 8 "And the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb,"—(the very thing prohibited to S. John before the Angel—upon the ground—"Worship God.") vs. 13. "And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea and all that are in them, heard I saying blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever."

Can any man imagine that a *creature* would thus be joined with his God? Cannot men see that the worship which is demanded for Divinity alone, and is restricted to Divinity alone, is here paid by the whole universe and by Heaven itself, to the Lamb, conjointly with the Father?—The Lamb, who is in Chaps. xvii and xix entitled "The Word of God," "King of kings and Lord of Lords," and who is described—"his vesture dipped in blood—his eyes a flame of fire—Upon his head many crowns—The Faithful and True."

And so the association in Power and Glory goes on. The kings of the earth vi:16-17. call to the mountains, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him that sitteth on the throne, and⁵ from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come." While the redeemed cry with a loud voice, vii:10-11. "Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and⁵ unto the Lamb. And all the angels * * * fell before the throne on their faces and worshipped God." In the eleventh chapter it is written (v. 15), "There were great voices in Heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ; and He shall reign forever." And so, xii:10 "I heard a loud voice saying in Heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ." Of the new Jerusalem it is said, xxi:23. "The glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof."²² "The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the

⁵Those familiar with the force of the Greek *Kai*, can understand how in these passages and in those which follow, "He that sitteth upon the throne," may be the *same* with the Lamb, and how in the latter passage (VII:10), God and the Lamb may be construed in apposition.

temple of it.” xxii:8. “The throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it.” And as the Apocalyptic vision commences with the assumption by the Lord Christ of the Divine titles, so it ends : xxii:12-13-16. “Behold I come quickly ; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” * * * “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things.” “I am the *Root* and the offspring of David.”

What unintelligible, inextricable confusion, if the Lamb be not God. The same names and titles—not only the same throne, but the same praises and homage—worshipped as God is worshipped, and as angels are not allowed to be worshipped. If the Lamb—if the Christ—be not God, then is there no meaning in the absolute and exclusive command, “*Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve.*” It is broken in Heaven itself.

And observe in all that has been cited from the Apocalypse, its entire harmony with what the Lord Himself taught of Himself during His human life. S. John xiv:28. “My Father is greater than I.” Yet, x:30. “I and my Father are one,” and xiv:9. “He that hath seen me HATH SEEN THE FATHER.” So, also, xiii:45 and xv:24. Again, vi:37. “All that the Father giveth me,” yet, xvi:15. “All things that the Father hath are mine.” v:19. “The Son can do nothing of Himself,” [or separately] yet “What things soever He [the Father] doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise.” Observe the inseparability and identity of the Father and the Son as one God. Those who have seen the one have seen the other, and what the one does the other does. Wherefore again, v:23. “That all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father.” S. John 1:1 comprehensively declares, “In the beginning was the Word,”—wherefore His past Eternity or Eternal generation ;—“and the Word was with God—wherefore a distinction of Persons ;—“and the Word was God”—wherefore His Divinity ; in all, “God of God.”

SONSHIP, it is true ; DERIVATION, it is true ; SUBORDINATION in some sense, it is true. But true also, that He is GOD,

and worshipped in Heaven itself as God ; as the sharer of the Divine titles and prerogatives ; of the throne, the power and the authority of God.

But if *God*, how can mortal man refuse Him His Divine honors and live ? If all Heaven did not hesitate to fall down before Him and worship Him, what shall be said of the sinful man who, with all this record before his eyes, yet refuses to worship Him, or to acknowledge Him as God ? And what shall be said of the professed worshipper of this Lord of lords, who yet has no horror for the system which denies to his Lord the homage due Him ; who can, with his master's own divine blood sprinkled upon his soul, yet regard without indignation and alarm, the advances of a system which denies the Lord who thus bought him, and who would with no misgivings entrust the education of christian children to such a system ? Can there be any innocence, anything but fearful sin and danger, in that religious Faith which in the light of all these revelations withdraws from God, the Saviour, the worship which all Heaven renders ? Say not that this doctrine of the Trinity is a mere metaphysical position. If it be false—I say it again—we Trinitarians are *Idolaters*.—If it be true, no words could express the horror we should have of Unitarianism. I do not speak of persons, but of the doctrine. God be thanked that they who have so fearful a doctrine may in despite of it have so many and so great virtues. And yet, for the sake of the doctrine itself, it may be well to remember how Holy Scripture through S. John, that gentlest of the Apostles, 2 S. John 10. forbid christians in his day to receive into their houses or bid God speed to those who brought not the doctrine of the Christ.

But if in proportion to the great duty of worship, must be the sin which denies the Lord and so refuses God the Son the worship due Him, so in the same proportion, must be estimated the sin of offering to that which is not God, the worship which belongs to God alone.

Yet, as I said before, I do not think that we are at all awake to the enormity of the sin of idolatry. Here let a distinction be observed. Idolatry, as the word is commonly

used, may mean either the worship of false gods or the worship of the true God, by, through, or under, the form of an image. Etymologically⁶ it is more strictly the latter, viz: a worship addressed to any god, false or true, by or through a *visible image or symbol*. We should not escape the sin by having the most correct ideas of the Godhead, if worshipping that Godhead through the medium of an image. Nor should we escape by pleading that we only worship the invisible God *through* the visible image. The more intelligent heathen professed to worship not the images themselves, but an invisible Deity, *through* them.⁷ The Second commandment is no mere explanation of the First. It announces a distinct principle, forbids a distinct sin. The First commandment forbids the sin of recognizing a *false* god, in whatever way worshipped, giving the glory of the true God to another. The Second prohibits divine worship *by or through images or visible representations*, however true the God worshipped. More especially of the sin against the Second commandment, is it true, that even we Christians fail to recognize its full enormity. And as to the *world's* estimate, what great wrong do worldly people feel to be in it? Foolish, they may think it, but vicious? not at all. To much modern theology, the severity of the Mosaic (and therefore, the Divine) law, which put the guilty to death for idolatry, and with exceptional rigor, required a man to inform against his guilty brother, or son, or daughter, or wife, is absolutely unintelligible. And if the positions I have taken with respect to the pre-eminent importance of divine worship be incorrect, then it is difficult to understand those laws. But it was precisely because God did hold and meant to hold the WORSHIP due Himself to be man's *preeminent* duty, that the sins of which I speak to-day were rated as so enormous. Consider how for the sin of idolatry God punished the Hebrews, as a nation, with pestilences, invasions, captivity, death, massacre, national destruction; how for nine hundred years He scourged it after

⁶ The word (*eidolon*) means a *visible form*.

⁷ Arnobius, *adv. Gentes* VI:10, represents his Heathen opponent as replying: "We do not think either the brass or the materials of gold and silver, or other materials of which images* are made to be themselves, *per se*, gods and sacred deities; but in them we worship and venerate those whom the sacred dedication introduces and causes to dwell in the images."

this manner on every occasion, and say, how can we in the light of God's own historical interpretation of His own commandments, regard the sin of idolatry as less than an awful enormity? However our natural unsanctified instincts may shrink from these estimates, let us beware how we criticise the sacred record, or sit in presumptuous judgment upon the judgments of God. There were not only more humility, but better sense also, in striving to correct our own estimates by those of Revelation, and in learning from God's wisdom how sore must be the sin which is against either the Second commandment or the First.

But let me remind you that the sin against the Second commandment was not that of worshipping a *false* god, but that of worshipping any God, even the true, through the media of images. God did not permit a visible image even of Himself, or that the Hebrews should worship Him by the aid of an outward symbol. "Take ye good heed to yourselves," was His warning Deut. IV:15. "for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the Lord spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire, lest ye corrupt yourselves and make you a graven image." The sight of any visible shape was withheld, expressly in order to prevent the Hebrews from worshipping the God of Mt. Horeb—the true God—by or through any image or visible symbol. The specialty of the Second commandment, delivered upon that very occasion was the prohibition of symbol worship.⁸

And this seems to me to constitute the great *practical* objection to the doctrine of transubstantiation, which teaches that God the Son is perpetually upon the altars of His church, and is to be worshipped there under a creature form (*sub specie panis, &c.*): a form in itself as insensible and unresisting as was ever idol of wood; whereof part could be used, as the prophet argued, to heat an oven and to bake bread, and part to warm oneself withal. Is. XLIV:15-19. Even so may the bread of the Eucharist be consumed or put to base uses. The prophet's appeal was directly and positively to the senses. If the

⁸ The worship of the living Christ could constitute no exception to this law, for He was God Himself, not a symbol of God. But now, the Heaven has received Him, and we are told that it must receive Him "until the restitution of all things," Acts III:21.

senses could not be depended upon in the one case, neither could they be depended upon in the other. If what seems to sight, taste and touch, bread and wine, is not, but is *only* flesh and blood, as to substance, so might what seemed a wooden idol, be under its apparent accidents, really a divinity. So in the first ages of Christianity, the fathers of the church argued with their heathen adversaries against the worship of images. "Do you not see (writes one) that these images at times fall into ruins from the constant dropping of rain? In this case, do you not see that newts, shrews, mice, &c., build their nests and live under the hollow parts? Do you not see sometimes over the face of an image cobwebs and treacherous nets spun by spiders, that they may be able to entangle in them *buzzing and imprudent* flies. Blush then, and accept the ways of reason from dumb creatures, and let these teach you that there is nothing divine in images."

Arnobius adversus Gentes vi:9. But what if to arguments like these, their heathen interlocutors could have replied, "Do you not believe that piece of bread, which you handle and break as you please, to be the The Christ, "Body, Soul and Divinity?" *Corc. Trid. Sess. xiii, Can. I and II.* Do you not see that mice and insects do sometimes gnaw it, and that spiders spin their webs and catch their flies upon it and by help of it, or that if it escape such casualties, the escape is due to your human creature precautions and care of it, and not to any power of its own to repel its assailants? Will not exposure to the weather destroy it also? And if kept too long will it not turn to natural corruption? O inconsistent Christian! you stultify yourself by your argument against our gods." Can it be that Christians believing in transubstantiation and practising Eucharistic adoration, would have assailed idolatry with such rash arguments, or laid themselves open to such a swift reply? Or indeed that they would have found any such difficulty in the heathen idea of Divinity resident in idol forms? But in either case, what would have become of the Second commandment with such visible, sensible (yet insensible, helpless) images or symbols of the Godhead presented perpetually for worship?

The mere theory of transubstantiation, which is such an undefined horror to many, seems to me after all nothing but a metaphysical subtlety ; in its concrete form contrary to evidence, and in some respects absurd and impossible;⁹ but of little consequence if it could remain a mere theory. As a mere theory, it would be only another chapter in theological metaphysics. But make it practical, and if not true, the result is IDOLATRY. [See Appendix A.]

I would not have you on account of its practical consequences, reject it, but because it is not metaphysically true. I hold that we have no right to accept or reject theories or doctrines upon the ground of consequences, or upon any ground other than that of their truthfulness or untruthfulness. But the doctrine of transubstantiation being untrue, its practical mischief manifests itself : First, when it undermines the miraculous evidences of Revelation ; [See Appendix A.] and Second, when it comes into conflict with the Second commandment, by offering for our worship a visible representative of the invisible God. And it being untrue, all genuflexions and bowings to the elements or specially before the elements, as containing the Divine presence, become of the nature of idolatry. The elements are to be treated respectfully, to be handled and received reverently, devoutly, not as common bread and wine, but as the *sacramental* body and blood of Christ our Lord ; to be received by us at least, upon our knees, as worshipping God, and as receiving at the time a great gift from God, and if possible, so that of the consecrated bread no crumbs shall fall to the ground, to be trodden under foot.¹⁰ But to bow down to the elements or before them, is, I fear, nothing less than the awful sin of *idolatry*. The Lord Christ may be in them, or behind them, and may of course be worshipped, but not *through* them. To do so, would be to do the very thing forbidden by the Second commandment. They are still creature bread and wine and

⁹ As when it is maintained that *accidents* can exist separate from their substance, "So that there may be whiteness and nothing white, sweetness and nothing sweet" S. Thomas Aquinas is quoted as speaking of "form detached from matter" and so becoming "a form intelligible by action and intelligent." Scudamore Notitia Euch. p 834.

¹⁰ Wherefore it is better that the bread be received in the extended palm rather than between the fingers, as we would take any indifferent object.

are no more to be adored than was S. Peter to be adored by Cornelius, because Christ was not only literally by virtue of His Omnipresence in St. Peter, but was moreover *specially* in His chosen Apostle, by the power of the Holy Ghost. So is the Omnipresent God present in every graven image also. (See Appendix B.)

But brethren, do not I pray you, misunderstand me. When I say, there may be a special presence of Christ in or with the elements, I do not mean to express a doubt. I believe the He *is* so really though spiritually invisibly, and mysteriously present in or with the consecrated elements, that he who eats or drinks unworthily "is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord," and "eats and drinks condemnation," for that he does not by faith discern (in them) the Lord's body. ^{1 Cor. xi:27-29.} This actual, special, spiritual presence, I believe; because I believe that the Lord Himself taught it; S. John vi:33-51-58. because I believe that S. Paul taught it; ^{1 Cor. x:16; xi:27-29.} and because all christian antiquity so understood the Apostolic doctrine, and therefore in turn believed and taught it. But I equally believe that Christ is not *sensibly* present to be worshipped, but that His natural body is in Heaven and must there continue "till the time of the restitution of all things," as He Himself declares, "Me ye have not always."

Of one thing we may be confident, viz: That the first Christians did not worship the elements, or worship before them as before an incarnate Christ. Can you imagine S. Paul to have believed that the elements were to be worshipped or God worshipped through them, and never in all his epistles to have said so? Was he not the man of all others to claim with his fiery zeal, this honor for them had it been their due?

Of course we must not presume to dictate to Revelation. But seeing that God has given us ~~reasons~~, [see Appendix C.] in order that we may understand what in His Revelation He teaches us, learning both from the words and from the silences of Holy writ, how can we help, if really anxious not to go beyond the truth, making the natural inference from

the silence of Holy Scripture here? And I say again, that there is not in the earliest Christian writers, any evidence whatever of worship paid or to be paid to or through the elements. Of their belief in a mysterious presence of Christ in the sacrament, so as to call the bread the body of Christ and the wine his blood, there are abundant evidences; but not in such a presence, as to demand or justify adoration to or before the elements.

It is very difficult to treat such subjects satisfactorily within the limits of a sermon. But I have striven to-day to do my duty to you, by indicating two great contrasted yet harmonious laws of Christian faith and practice, in the matter of divine worship. The one: that which REQUIRES divine honors for all that is God; the other, that which PROHIBITS divine worship to or through outward and visible symbols or images. I desire to put before you no mere notions of my own, but the doctrine of that branch of the Holy Catholic Church to which we belong; the doctrine of the Apostolic and Ante Nicene Church. I would take, and would maintain, the positions thus assigned us, with no doubt or hesitation indeed, but with a decent and modest respect for the opinions of the great and good who have taught differently. And lastly, I feel, and desire to feel the awfulness of such a subject, and the great peril, which would result from a misstep in guiding you among such doctrines.

God save us from either form of error; and while keeping us gentle and modest toward those who may hold either, yet make us for the sake of God and of the truth, uncompromising in our hostility to the errors themselves, that we may worship the Lord our God according to the commandment, but may also according to the commandment, bow down before no image or symbol graven or otherwise.

APPENDIX A.

Let me explain. I distinguish between Transubstantiation as a *fact*, or physical change, and the *doctrine* of Transubstantiation as known to theology. Transubstantiation as a fact, is perfectly possible. The water at Cana was transubstantiated into wine. Nay, our daily food is daily transubstantiated into the materials which constitute our bodies. And so, the bread and wine which our Saviour ate and drank while on earth, was transubstantiated into His own blessed body and blood.

Nor would there be any greater difficulty to Divine power, in accomplishing this change instantaneously, and by the words of consecration, than in effecting it by the intermediate process of digestion.

But this is not the whole *doctrine* of Transubstantiation ; which teaches that in the Eucharist, this change occurs without any corresponding *trans-accidentation*; that the accidents of the bread and wine, i. e. the taste, color, form, odor, and effect upon the touch, remain ; but that the bread and wine are nevertheless gone ; and that what still seems bread and wine, is, after the consecration, nothing but real flesh and blood under the appearance of bread and wine ; that it is God the Son visibly present, under the form of bread and wine, and as such, to be worshipped.

If, indeed, the elements after consecration, assumed the appearance or taste of flesh and blood, as the water at Cana assumed the appearance and taste of wine, and as the food our Saviour ate and drank assumed, not only the reality but the appearance also, of flesh and blood in His sacred body, we

could have no difficulty in accepting the doctrine. But now our senses contradict it. God seems to testify to us by our eyes and other senses, which He, the author of Faith and Revelation, has bestowed upon us, that it is not so. And therefore we reject the *doctrine*, because the supposed fact of Transubstantiation is not sustained by the corresponding fact of trans-accidentation, *by which alone, the former could be proven to our present mental organization.* Not that we question the *power of God*, to change the substance, but cause the flesh and blood to retain the appearance and other accidents of bread and wine. The difficulty is not in any doubt of the power of God, but in the want of *evidence* to us, that God *chooses* to make such a change; or perhaps more accurately, in the evidence which God *does* give to our senses, that He has *not* made it, and that we are misinterpreting His word, in supposing such a change intended by the expressions of that word. It is said that we must move by Faith in this matter, and be ready to believe the evidence of the word of God against the evidence of our senses; that our senses, after all, report only accidents, and cannot reach the substance. To this it must be replied, 1st, That the very point in dispute is whether the word of God *does* teach this doctrine; whether this is the *meaning*; whether it is not more reasonable to understand the evident fact as interpreting the written word, than to suppose the written word to contradict the evident, or apparently evident fact, more especially since 2dly, The stoutest advocates for a literal interpretation yet resort to a figurative one, when they explain, "*This cup is the New Testament in my blood,*" to refer to the contents of the cup.(a) But 3rdly, That *thus to reject the evidence of the senses, is to reject the evidence of miracles, and of Revelation itself.* Miracles appeal to the senses. If the evidence of the senses that the bread is still bread, cannot be relied on, neither could the evidence of the senses, that at Cana, the water was really changed into wine, be relied on. Transubstantiation is alleged upon the authority of Revelation. Revela-

(a). Or as when our Lord says "*I am the true vine,*" we do not understand a literal vine with wood and bark, but ex necessitate rei, give a figurative interpretation.

tion, (so far at least as concerns the disclosure of *facts* or phenomena hidden from direct human observation, and appealing to no inner consciousness, so far at least, Revelation) rests upon the evidence of miracles. Miracles are proven upon the evidence of the senses. The doctrine of Transubstantiation which denies the credibility of the evidence of the senses, or at least its reliability, in so doing, destroys its own evidence. It is a case of doctrinal suicide.

Of course, the same argument would not apply to the doctrine of the Real Presence, or even to that of Consubstantiation ; neither of which deny the continued existence of the bread and wine.

I would not be willing to say, that for the reasons given, Transubstantiation, even if true, *could not be proven at all* ; but only, that its proof would require other evidences than have ever yet appealed to man, even in behalf of Revelation itself ; and probably higher than any which his present mental organization is capable of receiving. *As man is at present organized, God has not yet chosen to make it possible to prove to him the doctrine of Transubstantiation.* Wherefore for this as for other reasons, we do not, and are persuaded that we *cannot*, rationally believe it.

APPENDIX B.

I have not before me the means of verifying the following quotations from the Notitia Euch., of Scudamore; but if correct, they evidently teach a worship of the elements, and not merely of God behind them, p. 550, "The Roman rubric orders the Priest to lift the Host on high, and with eyes fixed upon it, (which he is to do also in the elevation of the cup) reverently to *show* it to the people *to be worshipped*." So that what is *worshipped*, is that which is *shown*. Again, p. 549. The decree of the Synod of Exeter, A. D., 1287. "Because by these words, 'This is my Body,' and by no other, the bread is transubstantiated into the Body of Christ, let not the Priest elevate the Host until he has fully brought out those words, *lest the creature be worshipped by the people for the Creator*." Similarly, the Statutes of Noyon forbid the elevation above the breast before the words of consecration, "lest the honor which is due to the Creator only, be rendered to that which is, *as yet*, no more than a creature."

That such of the advanced school of Ritualists as are represented by Mr. Bennett of Frome, hold substantially the same view, seems evident from Mr. Bennett's own language ; his first forms of expression, as to the "*visible presence of our Lord upon the altars*," and teaching the people to "*adore the consecrated elements*," being capable of no other straight forward interpretation ; and his well known change of that phraseology being by his own assertion, intended to indicate no change of meaning upon his part, but only to avoid possible misconstruction.

APPENDIX C.

We are sometimes bidden to believe, and not to reason. There is a sense in which this advice is sound, as when any given proposition has been definitely ascertained to be the word of God. In such cases we must no longer reason, but simply believe. But to apply this advice to the preliminary investigations of which I have spoken, implies a confusion of ideas. Strictly, Faith and Reason are not in conflict. They have different fields. Reason ascertains, 1st, The divine origin of the given proposition ; and 2nd, comprehends its true meaning. Faith accepts what is thus comprehended and ascertained to be the word of God. It is the peculiarity of Faith to accept truths upon testimony. But in order to do this, Faith must first be convinced of the reliability of the witness. This latter conviction it is the office of Reason to accomplish. There may be impressions, so-called convictions, outside of any such investigation, and it may happen that they are true. Such impressions may be all, that for the time, we can have. The child at first has no other. But an intelligent faith in christian mysteries is something more than this. It requires 1st, A witness ; 2d, That the witness be reliable ; and 3rd, An intelligent comprehension of what the witness tends to disclose.

Whatever then is ascertained to be the testimony of God, must be at once, and without reserve or criticism, accepted. But Reason must first ascertain that God has spoken, and *what* God has spoken. Not merely the words, but their meaning. It must comprehend the *idea* revealed. There

the office of Reason closes. It does not go on to scrutinize the details or consequences of what is revealed. It refuses to do this because it is Reason. But it is the *idea* which is comprehended, and not the mere *words*. And Reason must *comprehend* the idea, before Faith can accept it. In the face of much of the popular religious language of the day, I affirm that we are never called upon to believe, either what we cannot comprehend, or what cannot be proved ; and furthermore, that we CANNOT believe what we cannot comprehend. The *facts* of a Trinity, of Freewill, of God's omnipresence, we can comprehend and believe. Their *quo modo*, *how* the Trinity can consist with the Unity of the Godhead ; *how* Freewill can consist with Divine Providence and Causality ; or *how* God can be wholly everywhere ; we cannot comprehend, and we are not expected to believe either. So with all the greater mysteries of our Religion. So with the doctrine under consideration. We are not called upon to believe *how* the bread and wine can be the body and blood of Christ, and yet remain creature bread and wine.— Still less are we called upon to believe, what is no Revelation at all, but only a logical inference. For after all, the advocate of Transubstantiation is the real appellant to Reason—and that not true reason. He introduces logical inferences into the midst of mysteries, where in the nature of the case, the logic must run in opposite and conflicting directions, according to the side from which the logician starts. And as this is not true Reason, so neither is it any part of a true Faith to accept, as parts of the original Revelation, the *inferences* which Reason may thus make. It was the error of the Arians, Sabellians, Patripassians, Entychians and Fatalists, of old and is the error now of the advocate of Transubstantiation, to require faith in unrevealed inferences from Revelation. As, that because Christ was begotten, therefore He had a beginning ; because the Father and the Son are one, therefore the Father suffered upon the Cross ; or because the elements are called by our Lord His body and blood, therefore they are no longer bread and wine, though having still all the accidents of bread and wine ; and therefore they

may be adored. In all this, Reason intrudes, by appending its own purely logical inferences, and so far, holds up a purely human creed for Faith. But it must fall within the province of Reason to make the preliminary investigation, which ascertains whether or not the grounds upon which the doctrine of Transubstantiation or any other doctrine is offered, are consistent with, or destructive of all Revelation ; whether therefore the revelation of such a doctrine is possible ; whether God has made any revelation upon the subject ; what God has revealed by word to our understandings, and what He reveals to our senses. And in ascertaining the written or oral revelation, to regard not the bare words alone, but rather the idea conveyed by them ; and in doing this to interpret words according to the ordinary laws of language ; making all due allowance for the difference to be expected between the revelation of a command or duty, and the revelation of a mystery or privilege. The amount of all which is the enquiry, what does God really tell us ? ^{Then} Reason stays herself, and Faith steps in, and accepts without qualification all that in this way it has been ascertained that God really says.

There is then, no conflict between Faith and true Reason. They operate in different fields. But Reason must precede Faith, and Faith can only believe what Reason comprehends, and ascertains to be the actual word of God.

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